

Christianity and Crisis

A Bi-Weekly Journal of Christian Opinion

VOL. XI, No. 21

DECEMBER 10, 1951

\$2.00 per year; 10 cents per copy

The Lost Advent

THE demise of the nineteenth century has been celebrated and deplored frequently in recent years. The sense of expectancy so characteristic of that era has been characterized on the one hand as fatuous optimism and on the other as the emotional matrix of great achievements. For weal or woe, the mood of eager anticipation has largely disappeared from the world. A time of hope and of belief in social evolution and inevitable human progress has given way to a time of pessimism and despair in which all achievements are regarded as tentative and ambiguous. A peaceful century confident that war was anachronistic has been followed by the bloodiest century in history. Most men have now disabused their minds of the notion that the clue to the future is to be found in automatic processes of nature or history. Bewildered, many turn instead to esoteric cults, to neo-fundamentalism, to cynicism.

The hope for corporate solution of social inequities, so prevalent in mass movements and ideologies at the beginning of this century, has been betrayed on nearly every hand. The sharp trend away from the individualism of the last century toward collectivism in our own is quite clear. But the urge toward solidarity in a complex and interdependent world has been perverted into totalitarianism in many countries and human solidarity has been fractured more deeply than ever. Perfectly legitimate demands for justice have been exploited by agents of tyranny and grosser forms of injustice have been institutionalized. The desire for security has been a dominant political force and man has seldom become more insecure.

In contrast to the grayness at mid-century even the nineteen twenties—that last splutter or afterglow of the nineteenth century—appear luminous and inspire a new wistfulness. Long regarded as a decade of superficiality and irresponsibility (which it was for the most part), that period has suddenly excited fresh interest. The life and works of F. Scott Fitzgerald are experiencing a remarkable re-

vival; he and his characters were undeniably disolute but they were also vital; there was an enchanted quality about their disenchantment and their shallow lives were always viewed in the perspective of an exterior and larger meaning. Youth at least had enough vitality to flame. The Harding administration was shoddy but Coolidge and Hoover always knew where they stood — or sat. Problems there were aplenty, and the solutions proposed — welfare capitalism, a pact to outlaw war, parallel racial development—are seen in retrospect to have been naive. But solutions were proposed and believed in, and men could still hope.

Now we have come into a bleak time, a sodden, benumbing, nihilistic time when the most sensitive spirits destroy themselves in one way or another and the most acute diagnosticians are cynics. Egregious blunders in high places are accepted apathetically except when partisan advantage may be gained from protest. Corruption and venality titivate jaded sensibilities but shock few consciences. Solutions for human ills are viewed skeptically and often rejected peremptorily without real consideration.

In very truth, alternatives in most realms afford small scope for affirmative hope. To drop or not to drop the bomb. To vote for Truman or Taft. To speak up and risk innuendo and castigation or to remain quiet and let conviction die. To marry the expedient or to burn in silent opposition. These are typical of current alternatives—if alternatives they are.

A few positive voices are heard, but they are most often pathetic in their eagerness and hollow in timbre. One calls for world government, but nearly everybody knows that the call is premature. Another calls for Christian action, but the meaning of the adjective is obscure and the noun is variously declined. Another, raucous, defends Americanism in accents wholly un-American.

Advent is long overdue in the subjugated province of the human spirit. It is very late this year, don't

you think? They said it was expected some days ago, but we have searched the skies in vain for the star. Mary is hidden away and the shepherds are fast asleep, their sheep astray. We know only that all the world goes now to be taxed and that the infants stir fitfully against their appointed slaughter.

Advent is very late and perhaps its meaning is lost. Perhaps He will not come again? Or we shall not know His appearing? It had been prophesied that He would come and promised that He would be in the midst of us. But a hopeless generation looks for a sign, and its sense of expectancy dies.

Clearly He will not come except as there is faith on the earth, and hope for His appearing. Now hope must be cast in a different dimension from that of the nineteenth century. Then it was the parent, now it must be the child, of faith. A faith that knows the seriousness of the times but flees neither to the now-fruitless womb of the past nor to a mirage of miraculous deliverance in the future. A faith that understands the modern equivalents of exclusion from inns and the apprehensions of Herod and the confusion of the wise men, but is not confounded by any of these. A faith aware, as our grandfathers too seldom were, of the frailty of man and the contingencies of life on the earth, but not in despair (as our contemporaries are) about all human possibilities. A faith redeeming temporal opportunities because it is given direction by God's timeless purposes. A faith providing substance for things hoped for, providing evidence of things unseen, translating itself through hope into love.—L. P.

Editorial Notes

An indication of the suspicion in which American power is held by even our friendliest allies is the increasing fear of European nations that we might use atomic weapons without consulting them. It is rumored that one of the primary purposes of Winston Churchill's visit to this country in January is to exact a promise from us that we will not use our air bases in Britain without full agreement with the British Government about the purposes of any missions from them.

Another straw in the wind is the apprehension created in Europe by views expressed by the chairman of our Atomic Energy Commission, Mr. Dean. He declared in effect, that if the Chinese communists did not soon agree to an armistice in Korea we might be forced to use tactical atomic weapons against them. These views gained little attention in this country but have aroused some very violent

reactions in Europe. Mr. Dean is not exactly an authoritative spokesman for us; but European friends and critics have a right to assume that the words of so important an official must mirror some influential Washington opinion.

The apprehensive reactions in Europe to this particular statement are significant because they prove that our allies are not at all happy about our monopoly in atomic weapons because they are still not certain that we may not be more anxious to win a war than to avoid it. Hence they fear that we might be tempted to throw bombs prematurely. They are also afraid that recent tests of so-called "tactical" atomic weapons in Nevada means that we may use these less destructive types of atomic weapons in present military operations and thus wipe out the last possibility of avoiding atomic weapons in future wars. It is indeed a source of real concern that our "experts" should make so much of the fact that "tactical" atomic weapons are not very different from other modern weapons. Thereby they obscure the importance of the psychological and moral distinction between atomic and other weapons. Obviously the first use of tactical atomic weapons practically invites the counteruse of any kind of atomic weapon.

The mistrust of our policy among Europeans and Asians has been accentuated by this particular issue. But it is also indicative of our general position in the world today. We are more feared than admired for our technical skills particularly because it is believed that we are inclined to give technocratic answers to profound perplexities and to subordinate moral and political considerations to purely military strategy. Let us take note of these fears of our friends. Perhaps they will help us to achieve a more balanced wisdom.

Dr. James W. Fifield, Jr., pastor of the First Congregational Church of Los Angeles, and head of the organization known as Spiritual Movement, recently addressed a public gathering in Whittier, California, in which he called for a "new freedom movement." In his address he said that "General George Marshall will be rated with Aaron Burr as one of the great traitors of this country," and that Senator McCarthy "is one of the best Americans in the United States today." Mr. Fifield gave as his opinion that "General MacArthur is the only one now in high position who is worthy to be President," and that "MacArthur's Cleveland speech almost belongs in the New Testament."

Comment upon these utterances is superfluous.

Government Pressure on Churches in China*

CHINA is under the control of the leaders of the Chinese Communist Party. This control extends, in varying degrees, to the smallest village, the most intimate social groups, and to every individual in the vast nation. This control is brought to bear on the nation by means of a multitude of devoted government cadres carrying out Party policy and Government directives with more or less imagination. It includes virtually absolute control of information and the production of ideas; a police force of far reaching power and growing efficiency, ever ready to perform its revolutionary task of "repressing revolutionary activity"; the organization of society in great blocks (workers, peasants, youth, women), and into tiny subdivisions from which few escape and which is designed to control life and thought. It is based on a set of dogmas which captivate some, and it knows of no tolerance of divergent thoughts. Thus it holds people in fear, as it is backed up by all the power of the state. This control is exercised in the name of a great dream which puts the revolutionary comrades in the forefront of history as both its servants and its makers.

In carrying out its program for the people of China and in their name (Party rule is characterized as "People's Democratic Dictatorship") it is necessary that the leadership secure popular support. Indeed, popular support is part of the dogmatic apparatus which is expressed in countless ways every day. Large and important groups of people might be considered as fairly solid in support of the program—the army, the bureaucratic army of cadres, the New Democratic Youth League, the labor unions, and, in fact, wherever the control of livelihood and of thought can be brought to bear on the group. But there remains the rest of the population upon whom this control still is indirect or at least slight, who are able to lead a somewhat independent life of their own, and who, in the Communist terminology, are not yet fully "awakened," due to "superstition," "feudalism," "Imperialism," "Kuomintangism," or other reactionary influences. Therefore it is the task of the leadership and the long chain of command, to awaken the masses, to force the issue, exposing the essential evil of the enemy's ideas, society, and culture. They have set themselves the colossal task of pushing, pulling, persuading, or forcing the whole people into support for the revolutionary program. Over and over again one hears the dogmas: "There is freedom to join the revolution, but

no freedom to oppose the revolution," and "There is collective freedom, no individual freedom."

In a social situation like this the church cannot remain unaffected. This is true of any organization, but the church must be the object of special attention because she is an organization with an independent bias due to her belief in God who is above the Communist Party, as well as the more obvious reasons of close association with the churches and cultural influences of the West.

I

Many church members in A tried to meet the situation by methods used successfully during the Japanese occupation — evasion, negative response, lying low, carrying on church work as inconspicuously as possible. This policy proved impossible. No work could be inconspicuous in the eyes of the Government. Furthermore the methods used by the Government were those of infiltration. Suggestions came not from the Government, but from members of Christian circles themselves who came to see the necessity of a positive response to the Government's program for the nation. Then, when these suggestions were made from within the Christian community, opposition to them would expose a person to suspicion of having reactionary thoughts, and perhaps cause a split in an already weak organization. Thus the course usually followed was to consider these suggestions, probably quite mild ones, as veiled commands from the Government, or representing the aims of the Government, and to follow along as far as was necessary. The result has been, for many, a sort of double life, as one step of outward conformity leads to another, while the inner man objects and must be suppressed. The result from the Government point of view, however, was to make available another handle for them to control the churches at essential points.

The impact of the revolution began in the winter of 1950 when two national Christian leaders came to A, with Government approval. One was enthusiastically for the new Government, the other rather cautious in public, but at that time, apprehensive in private. The leaders stressed the great things the new Government was doing for China, and the important principle of "freedom of religion," and urged the church people to learn more about their new Government, its aims and program. The result was the organization of a study group of church leaders, to meet each week at the YMCA, to study the Common Program of the Government in order to understand,

* For obvious reasons this article is published anonymously. It will be apparent that the author has intimate knowledge of affairs in China.

approve, and cooperate with it more fully. This group was led by an elderly pastor who had also been selected by the Government to be one of the representatives of religious circles at the All Circles Political Consultative Conferences of city and province. He expressed his position thus: "When the tide is running, you don't try to buck it lest you be swept away. No, you stand to one side, and let it go by."

The next step was the reform movement which came out of Christian circles, though with Government advice on a national level. A statement was issued, then redrafted, and adopted by the National Christian Council in the fall of 1950 as official. It was circulated among all the churches in the nation for signatures as a Christian Manifesto. The statement itself was mild enough on a liberal interpretation, but contained several points which could be used to force the Churches to do certain things. It lined them up solidly behind the Government's Common Program. It could be interpreted to mean that all missionary endeavors have been in whole or in part imperialistic, especially American missionary work. The signing of this manifesto was made the test of patriotism, and thus signatures were numerous. Christian students in a former mission school were carefully watched by the New Democratic Youth League to see whether they signed. It would have been difficult not to sign for the issues were not clear cut, and the immense pressure brought to bear tended to affect their thinking.

II

Beginning in mid-autumn of 1950, the Government campaign to marshal public opinion behind its Korean policy suddenly became more intense. City wide mass meetings were held to "Oppose America and Aid Korea," and to "Oppose American rearming of Japan." At these meetings the churches were required to have delegations present. The church leaders had to get out the paraders, and lead them in calling out slogans with as great a show of enthusiasm as possible. During this time, the suggestions came from the Christian group that individual churches organize study groups for their own leaders and staff, to study "current events." The thing was becoming more manageable, with more handles developing.

An example of tactics is seen in the case of a man who had been active during the Japanese occupation in educational work and was attempting to carry on as before. He suddenly found himself thrust into public affairs by being elected at a district meeting to serve on the district executive committee as representative of religious circles. He was greatly upset at what he would have to do and say in this position. But what could he do? From the Govern-

ment's point of view, another potential leader of reaction had been put in a position where he would have to do "right."

America's freezing of the People's Government assets and her embargo on funds were used in such a way as to prevent all Chinese groups or organizations from receiving American funds, even after the channels might have been reopened. This incident is still being used to gain further control over the churches, for obviously those organizations receiving funds from America must be made to see why China must fight American imperialism.

In March, 1951, a series of topics for discussion was presented to the city leaders study group. From the nature of the topics it will be seen that the discussion could only be on ways of pursuing the directives. The more basic questions had to be passed over as meaningless where there was no freedom to oppose the revolution. The topics were as follows: 1) Firmly oppose the use of religion as a tool of American imperialism for cultural and political aggression. 2) Issue a call to all churches to sever all relations with American imperialism, and to eliminate all poisonous influences of American imperialism in the churches. 3) Strengthen the political orientation of the churches, and prevent criminal and espionage elements from mixing in congregational membership. 4) Intensify the study of current events, raise the level of political awareness, completely eliminating all mistaken ideas of pro-America, respect for America, fear of America. 5) Support the Common Program and Government Policy. Respond to Government appeals. 6) Give every effort in aid of the movement to Oppose America and Aid Korea. 7) Unite with the Christians in the city in concrete support of the reform movement, and the triple independence movement (self-government, self-support, and self-propagation).

Meanwhile in the rural areas, the church felt the pressure less as it was socially less important. It was organizationally weak, and in $\frac{2}{3}$ of the province's rural churches, Christians had been unable to gather to worship for years. In addition, during the land reform period of that winter, all meetings of any sort were forbidden — all, that is, except political meetings. The district leaders were made to feel their duty in carrying political awareness to the country churches, and meeting of Christians to "Oppose America, Aid Korea" were held in the various areas, with only church leaders speaking. They knew they were being carefully observed. The chairman in the district had to make clear that he no longer desired the presence of the few American missionaries in his district, and asked them to apply for exit permits.

In the city the program was carried a long step forward by a campaign against two American mis-

sionaries. This did not come from the Government, but "spontaneously" through the leadership of the New Democratic Youth League. Their attempt to get Christian students to make the accusation failed, but in the winter of 1951 a full dress accusation meeting was held by the students as a whole against the missionaries, and a call was issued to the students of the whole nation for support in their efforts to rid the country of these "imperialist wolves in religious clothing."

This was followed in the spring by a second accusation meeting demanding of the Government to deal sternly with these imperialists. The missionaries were arrested and imprisoned, and the Christians in the city were gathered in a large meeting to "demand" that they be expelled from the country. Thus the incident was one more step toward the "awakening" of the church to its revolutionary duty, and resulted in further intimidation of some and confusion of others with lies and twisted half truths.

In May the churches received special attention in the form of demands that they hold two great accusation meetings against missionaries. Here the leaders themselves had to speak, and the results of the national accusation meetings held in Peking were applauded. The situation was kept at fever pitch by public executions of reactionaries or spies, great parades through the city streets, and impassioned speeches denouncing reactionaries.

III

The fact that the Government is still demanding that Christians be more vigorous in their denunciations is evidence that the churches are still not as subservient as the Government would like. On the other hand, there is no doubt that there has been official, unqualified support for the Government program of anti-Americanism, and of welding the religious groups into the monolithic social structure under the leadership of the Party by responsible organs and officials. Why has this been? One could name several factors: the enormous pressure of the manufactured public opinion; the fear of consequences of non-cooperation; the need for drastic changes in the relation of church and mission where many felt a new era was beginning and a chance for a new start; the deep-lying national pride of Chinese Christians who have come to feel a new self-respect in carrying China's new independence into the church organization; a general sincere approval by some Christians (to the knowledge of the writer, a very few) of the policy of the new Government and a willingness to allow the Government to make decisions in political matters about which they cannot be experts; a Christian thought-frame which did not include political and economic life, and thus was un-

prepared to analyze political events from a Christian point of view, with sufficient vigor to stand up against Marx-Leninist pretensions; the maneuvering of the group by a few leaders; and an aggressive and very clever Government policy.

The break with the West entailed in this program is meant to be complete. It begins with Western money, and includes Western personnel, literature from the West, and Western church organizations, including the "western" World Council of Churches.

Thus, Government control of life and thought and its utilization of the existing fears and hopes of people in China presents to every Christian a challenge which is not clear even though it appears simple. There is this, and this, in the program which appear good, and are good. This, and this, in the statements backing policy, are true, or partly true. Therein lies the source of confusion. Add to this the characteristic Chinese response of giving where necessary and yet reserving a passive, inner resistance which does not always show itself, and you have the preparation for compromise that seems shocking to those on the outside, but does not seem so on the inside—that is, until it is carried too far. We heard Christians say that one thing we must not do is to deny Christ. But when does this happen? The Government is far too clever ever to debate the question on Christian terms.

Christian youth were able to see the danger in the pressure put on them to join the New Democratic Youth League, and resisted this pressure. They had seen students deny their religious faith after they had become members. But they did take an active part in patriotic activities such as volunteer labor corps, sending comfort letters to soldiers in Korea, and the like. However, pressure grows on them; the principle of freedom of religion, even in the Youth Corps, makes their original judgment grow dim. It will be difficult for any to resist the intense pressures that are brought to bear on them, and their faith will be tried as by fire.

There seemed to be an increased sense of need for a deeper devotional life. One heard of Christians in rural areas meeting twice daily for prayer, of new seriousness on the part of students, which sometimes finds its outlets in an emotional type of prayer and worship. Among city people there had been great mass meetings of a revival nature, with faith healings, though a prominent Chinese evangelist was imprisoned and later accused by Christian leaders.

We should not forget that there is a large body of ordinary men and women in country, town and city, praying daily, and reading their Bibles, and that God uses such for His purposes. We must realize that the leadership of the church is engaged in a

struggle for maneuver in which the issues are not clear, and in which all the obvious advantages are on the side of the Government. These maneuvers do not reflect the common life of the churches, nor, perhaps, do they affect it deeply, except to cause inner suffering. For many Christians, prayer is the only form of action left open to them in which they are free. We may be sure that many of our fellow Christians, though their understanding of international or national issues may not be the same as ours, share with us "the tribulation, the kingdom, and the patient endurance." Meanwhile, mass movements, mass emotions, mass slogans, mass pressures of various sorts will not leave them untouched. They will be sifted like wheat. Let us be faithful companions to them in their time of difficulty and pray for them and for ourselves that our faith may not be found wanting.

Women in the Ministry

CYRIL C. RICHARDSON*

I

THE place of women in the ministry is intimately connected with the place of *feminine symbols in the Christian Faith*. A consideration of the doctrines of the Trinity and of the Church may help in establishing a viewpoint about women in Holy Orders. It is quite unsatisfactory to have two male and two neuter symbols as central to the Faith. Yet this has largely happened. We have the Father and the Son, but all too often we refer to the Holy Spirit and to the Church as "it". By recovering the ancient Catholic doctrines of the femininity of the Spirit and the Church, the need for women in Holy Orders will become apparent. For the ministry must reflect the nature of the Godhead and the principle of the Incarnation, which, of course, implies the Church. Once we grasp that the femininity of the Spirit does not make her inferior to the Father (for the persons of the Godhead are co-equal), and that the femininity of the Church does not make her inferior to Christ (for in her mystical being she shares in the fullness of Christ), we shall be in a position to have a theology of women in the ministry. The masculine and the feminine are complementary principles of being and necessary symbols of the Godhead and of the economy of the Incarnation.

II

Hence it is important that we should have priestesses in the Church. It is not only a question of their

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desirability. There is also the question whether the ministry tends to be defective without them.

This, however, implies that *priestesses are not the same thing as priests*. Much of the discussion of this controversial issue has gone awry by the assumption that a woman is just another kind of male. This misleading notion encourages all the evils of the "feminine protest." We do not want women *priests*. What we need is *priestesses* whose functions and authority are appropriate to their nature. In the priestess the motherhood of the Church can be given unique expression.

III

The ancient impediments to women in Holy Orders¹ are no longer tenable. These impediments are of two kinds: (a) the *regularity* of feminine ordinations, and (b) their *validity*.

The first is largely a question of cultural climate. It would certainly be inconvenient to have priestesses where the cultural situation made their work ineffectual. In the primitive Church, for instance, the place of women was naturally determined by Jewish culture. In our situation, however, with the increasing demonstration by women of their capacity to take leadership in the different professions, the issue of regularity will gradually cease to have significance. It is rather the question of validity which is the crucial one. Even if it be granted that women would make good priestesses under certain conditions, it might nonetheless be contended that a Christian priestess is impossible in the very nature of things.

Is this true? The Catholic contention has been that women are incapable of Holy Order because they are in a state of subjection by nature. According to Aquinas, their subjection to men is due to the fact that "in man the discretion of reason predominates." Now, the assumption that reason is the prior category of being is a scholastic fallacy. The prior category in Christianity is *agape*, a virtue which unites masculine and feminine, for in *agape* reason and intuition find their final harmony. *Caritas* does not (as in Aquinas) pertain only to the intellectual appetite. Love is more than reason redeemed. It comprehends both masculine and feminine. Hence, from a Christian point of view, neither reason nor intuition is the prior category. Neither the masculine society nor matriarchy is theologically sound. Only the society in which male and female are *complementary* to each other—not equal in the sense of being identical, but equal in the sense that neither has priority—is the true Christian society.

Once the notion that women by nature are sub-

¹It may be noted that "deaconesses" are not technically in Holy Orders. They are lay women with a special commission.

ject to men is removed, no impediment exists to women taking Holy Orders.

We may note in passing that the argument in Aquinas is not without further difficulties. He has to recognize that women may be prophetesses, that they may have spiritual and temporal authority as well as a "kind of preeminence" by virtue of martyrdom or the religious state. If all this, why not then the grace of Holy Orders? Only, he contends, because women cannot symbolize that "eminence of degree" essential for the sacrament. But, we may ask, why should God have chosen them as prophetesses (which implies declaring God's Word in public), if they lacked that eminence of degree? The argument lacks something in logic.

One further point may be noted. Even in Aquinas, the power of Holy Order does not touch sexuality. It is founded in the soul which he views as sexless. Hence some mediaeval theologians claimed that the only impediment to women's orders was regularity. This is an important point, because it shows that mediaeval theologians did not regard women as intrinsically incapable of receiving the grace of Holy Orders.

IV

It remains to discover what the appropriate and distinctive functions of the priestess should be. That, I feel, is the real point upon which Christian thinking needs to be done. But that women in principle not only may, but *ought* to preach and celebrate the sacraments seems to me essential to a right theology of Holy Orders.

The point of view from which the distinctive functions of the priestess are to be defined is that of *motherhood*. Implied in this are her creative capacities and her powers of nurture. Women who want to pattern themselves after men and seek to deny their feminine nature by trying to be priests, would be a travesty of the true conception of the priestess. By nature the priestess is fitted to express the motherhood of the Church, to interpret the feminine aspect of the Word, the sacraments and pastoral care. As the priest is a father to the faithful, the priestess should be a mother to them.

Much rigorous thinking needs to be done to show the full implications of this principle and to see it in the light of both married and unmarried vocations. Here we are only concerned with suggesting the principle itself. An analogy from the realm of medicine may help to clarify it.

One of the least satisfactory aspects of the modern hospital is the relation of doctor to nurse. Owing to masculine domination, the woman in medicine is often forced into one of two false positions. Either she becomes a doctor and loses much of her femininity if she tries to imitate the scientific medico, or

her training as a nurse is adapted to make her into an executive. Her peculiar talent as the *healing mother of the patient*, implying a role as important as that of the doctor and a type of healing of which the doctor by nature is incapable, is lost sight of. The bedside nurse, instead of being the highest type of nurse, is rapidly becoming a despised calling. The pressure on the modern nurse is to become a supervisor and administrator. Only when medicine comes to understand that *agape* is a real source of healing and that the ministrations of men and women are both needed to complement each other, will this unfortunate situation be rectified. But as long as the doctor behaves in the hospital as something of an autocrat, tending to treat the bedside nurse as his inferior, the principle of motherhood in healing will be neglected.

The bearing of this situation on the Church is clear. The priestess must not be an inferior being, subject to the overlordship of the priest. She must be his complement, and the ministry must unite fatherhood and motherhood, reason and intuition in a single whole. *Neither has priority, but both, under God, must find their fitting place, as equal but not identical, in the ministry of agape.*

V

Finally, the advisability of having Christian priestesses ought not to be argued on the basis that in some particular situations such as women's hospitals, colleges or prisons, they might prove more useful than priests. The fundamental issue is rather that in *all* situations the male and female should be represented in the ministry. Men need the ministry of women no less than women need the ministry of men. Or rather, each sex needs the ministry of *both* sexes in order that the principles of fatherhood and motherhood may be fully expressed in the Church.

Correspondence

Dear Sir:

With regard to prejudice about women in the church, it may interest you to know that in the course of our fight for political freedom in this country, I never came across quite such a quality of slime and "yellowness" as I did when I began to press the question of the ordination of women to the ministry of religion. Our political opponents were often brutal and ignorant but they never plumbed the depths of slime that the upholders of tradition in the churches did.

It seems almost comic that the "orthodox" should pour scorn on the erotic attraction that a handsome parson has for women, and at the same time speak of the sex atmosphere "radiated" by women "in a way which men do not," and dilate upon "the sexless impartial character which at present marks" public worship.

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A Bi-Weekly Journal of Christian Opinion
537 West 121st St., New York 27, N. Y.

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A rather curious light was thrown on to the attitude of some men towards sex by a man who, very kindly, came into the vestry of a church where I had been preaching, to tell me he had come to the service with great reluctance and had been converted to a belief in the ministry of women by hearing me preach. I thanked him, but he seemed reluctant to go. At last he burst out with an anxious question—"You wouldn't think it right for a *married* woman to preach, would you?" (This, of course, was before I married.) With some surprise I asked him why not? He looked as though something very unpleasant had touched him and said in deep disgust—"Not a *married* woman—a woman who had *had children*." (And so presumably had not embarked on an unconsummated marriage.) I said that, other things being equal, surely the experience of marriage and motherhood must enrich a woman's spiritual life. He repeated, still in tones of disgust, that "it would never do—people would never allow it." . . . I wonder if the enormous importance of sex in women as compared with men is correct.

I haven't found it to be "woman's whole existence" and believe that it has seemed to be so because the as-

sumption has been so convenient to men. Women have been divided into wives-and-mothers and prostitutes, and have been assured that this was a "natural" distinction. Surely a gross instance of rationalizing? Women to whom sex *is* their whole existence are one-sided to an extent which is really baffling and frustrating, but I don't find that there are very many of them. They are generally intensely attractive to men, even to the extent of being positively bored by them! . . . Others I know—and doubtless you know also—are annoyed by the fact that they can't ever have a man friend because men always want to make love to them. They are highly sexed but even they don't want this to be their *whole* existence.

There are many other such examples. An Anglican Bishop, married and with children, argued that it would be intolerable to have a woman standing at the altar "where all the congregation could see her ankles"!! And another Bishop pitied the priest who might have to walk into church behind "a pretty red-haired girl acolyte." A Congregational lady minister told me her marriage caused some concern among her congregation, but it was negligible compared with the outburst of *filth* which came when it was known that she was going to have a child. And this, not from anonymous ally-ways but in letters signed by respectable (?) members of her congregation.

DR. MAUDE ROYDEN (MRS. SHAW)

LONDON.

Schweitzer Seeks Seat In French Academy

Dr. Albert Schweitzer, famed Alsatian-born Protestant medical missionary in Lambarene, French Equatorial Africa, is one of eight candidates who are being considered for the seat in the French Academy left vacant by the death of Marshal Philippe Petain.

Members of the French Academy attend meetings wearing a special bottle green uniform and a tri-cornered hat, both heavily decorated with gold braid and embroidery, and a ceremonial sword.

It is the custom for a newly-elected member to make a speech at the first session he attends in tribute to the one whose chair he is to occupy. It has, therefore, caused some surprise that eight candidates, including Dr. Schweitzer, should have made themselves available to fill the seat formerly occupied by Marshal Petain.—*Religious News Service*

Bishop Asks Vote Against Constitution If Aid Is Barred

Roman Catholic Bishop James E. McManus of Ponce has urged Catholics in his diocese to vote against the Constitution being drawn up by a 92-man Commission on Bill of Rights if the Amendment of Feb. 3, 1921, to the Puerto Rico Organic Law is included.

The amendment of 1921 forbids the direct or indirect use of public funds or properties for the benefit of any religious group or individual. The Puerto Rico Constitution will be voted upon on January 21, 1952.—*Religious News Service.*

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